



- A composition comprising a pre-formed, hydrolytically susceptible non-1. addition polyanionic polymer comprising polymer strands formed from at least one ethylenically unsaturated monomer, wherein the polymer strands are linked by at least 5 Jone linking moiety comprising a hydrolytically susceptible bond, wherein at least one of which monomers has:
 - i) one or more functional groups that can be titrated with base to form negatively charged functional groups, or
- one or more precursor groups that are precursors of the functional groups that can be titrated with base; which precursof groups are converted to the functional 10 wherein at least one of the ethylenically unsaturated monomers is according to the formula:

$$(R^3)(R^2)C=C(R^1)-X-Y$$

15 wherein:

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Y is $-C(O)OR^4$; $-O-S(O_2)OR^4$ / $-S(O_2)OR^4$; or $-S(O)OR^4$; wherein R^4 is hydrogen or a cleavage permitting group;

X/is a direct bond; a straight or branched alkylene group having two to six carbon atoms (preferably C₁ to C₂), one or more of which can be replaced by O, S, or N heteroatoms, provided that there is no heteroatom in a position α or β to Y; phenylene; a five or six membered heteroarylene having up to three heteroatoms independently selected from O, S, and N, provided that neither Y or R³R²C=C(R¹) is bonded to a heteroatom; and

R¹, R², and R³ are independently selected from, hydrogen, C₁-C₆ alkyl, carboxy, halogen, cyano, isocyanato, C₁-C₆ hydroxyalkyl, alkoxyalkyl having 2 to 12 carbon 25 atoms, C₁-C₆ haloalkyl,/C₁-C₆ cyanoalkyl, C₃-C₆ cycloalkyl, C₁-C₆ carboxyalkyl, aryl, hydroxyaryl, haloaryl, cyanoaryl, C₁-C₆ alkoxyaryl, carboxyaryl, nitroaryl, or a group -X-Y; wherein C₁-C₆/alkyl or C₁-C₆ alkoxy groups are either linear or branched and up to Q-2 carbon atoms of any C₃-C₆ cycloalkyl group, wherein Q is the total number of ring carbon atoms in the cycloalkyl group, are independently replaced with O, S, or N 30 heteroatoms; with the proviso that neither doubly-bonded carbon atom is directly





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bonded to O or S; and wherein aryl is phenyl or a 5 or 6 membered heteroaryl group having up to three heteroatoms selected from the group consisting of O, S, and N.

- 2. The composition of claim 1, wherein linking moiety is formed by copolymerization of an ethylenically unsaturated linking agent, and the mole fraction of
 ethylenic double bonds in the combination from which the polyanionic polymer is made
 that is contributed by the ethylenically unsaturated linking agent is 0.02 or less.
- 3. The composition of claim 1, comprising a microgel formed of the polyanionic polymer.
 - 4. The composition of claim 3, wherein the microgel has a ratio of the macroviscosity of the microgel to the microviscosity of the microgel is 10,000 or less.
 - 5. The composition of claim 1, wherein the polyanionic polymer is functionalized to provide one or more pendant functional groups selected from hydroxy, acyl halide, chloroformate, and mercapto; and wherein

the linking moiety provides crosslinking and is a reaction product of the pendant groups between polymer segments or between the pendant groups and complementing functional groups of a linking agent.

- 6. The composition of claim 5, wherein the linking agent is the diacrylate of an α,ω -diol or the diacrylate of a chain extended α,ω -diol.
- 7. The composition of claim 1, wherein the ethylenically unsaturated linking agent comprises multidentate compound comprising two or more two or more ethylenically unsaturated moieties; each such moiety being linked to the multidentate compound through a hydrolytically susceptible bond.

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